

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LUBUMB 01150 131333Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 HA-05 MCT-02 GSA-02
SY-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 COME-00 ACDA-12
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 EB-08
FAA-00 DOTE-00 WRDE-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 MCE-00 SVC-00
/118 W

-----110550 131344Z /44

O R 131300Z SEP 78
FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2651
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMCONSUL BUKAVU

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUBUMBASHI 1150

KINSHASA PLEASE POUCH BUKAVU

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CG, MOPS
SUBJECT: FALSE RUMOR OF SHABA ATTACK

REF: LUBUMBASHI 1149 (NOTAL)

1. THIS CONSULATE DOES NOT INTEND TO GET INTO THE BUSINESS
OF TRYING TO DENY IN ADVANCE ALL RUMORS THAT MAY FLOAT OUT
OF SHABA. AT SAME TIME, CASE IN POINT THIS TIME REFLECTS
STATE OF MORALE OF SHABA RESIDENTS AND MAY ALREADY HAVE BEEN
WIDELY DISSEMINATED DUE TO ONE OF ITS ASPECTS. IN ADDITION,
STATE OF CONSULATE'S COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AT THIS TIME IS
SUCH THAT WE MAY BE OFF THE AIR VERY SHORTLY (REFTEL).
THEREFORE THE FOLLOWING:

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2. IN LATE AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 12, WITHOUT WARNING HIS
SUPERIORS OR PAN AFRICAN FORCES STATIONED AT LUBUMBASHI
AIRPORT, A FORCES ARMEES ZAIROISE (FAZ) LIEUTENANT IN AREA
OF AIRPORT DEPLOYED HIS PLATOON AS A TRAINING EXERCISE.
LUBUMBASHI AIRPORT TOWER PERSONNEL NOTICED THE DEVELOP-
MENT AND ALERTED THE EXPATRIATE CAPTAIN OF AN AIR ZAIRE

DC-10 (QC-090) PREPARING TO TAKE OFF FOR KINSHASA, LONDON AND BRUSSELS. HE ORDERED THE PLANE CLOSED AND AN IMMEDIATE TAKEOFF. BY THIS POINT, STORY HAD BECOME AN ATTACK BY REBELS UNDERWAY AT DILOLO, LIKASI, AND KIPUSHI, ALONG THE ZAIRIAN/ANGOLAN/ZAMBIAN BORDER. ALL AIRPORT PERSONNEL AND SOME FAZ STATIONED AT AIRPORT FLED THE AIRPORT AREA. BY MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 13, STORY HAD BEEN REPORTED TO CONSULATE VICARIOUSLY AS A FAZ REVOLT AT KIPUSHI, A STRIKE AND RIOTING AMONG GECAMINES ZAIRIAN EMPLOYEES, AND A FULL-SCALE REBEL ATTACK ON SOUTHERN SHABA.

3. AS OF NOW, WE ARE VIRTUALLY CERTAIN THAT THERE IS NOTHING TO IT, APART FROM INITIAL FLURRY AT AIRPORT WHICH DID OCCUR AND MAY ALREADY HAVE LED TO FALSE RUMOR BEING DISSEMINATED IN KINSHASA AND IN EUROPE. CONSUL TALKED WITH ZAIRIAN BUSINESSMAN WHO HAD COME FROM LIKASI LATE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 13 WHO DESCRIBES TOWN AS SEPULCHRAL IN ITS TRANQUILITY. LUBUMBASHI MAYOR KABONGO TOLD CONSUL AT NOON THAT HE HAD SENT SOMEONE TO KIPUSHI THIS MORNING TO SEE FOR HIMSELF AND THAT HIS AGENT HAD REPORTED BACK THAT NOTHING WAS HAPPENING, HAVING CHECKED WITH CIVIL AND MILITARY AUTHORITIES THERE AND SEEN FOR HIMSELF. AMERICAN ENGINEER WITH GECAMINES LUBUMBASHI TELEPHONED FRIEND IN KIPUSHI THIS MORNING WHO SAID THAT ALL WAS QUIET. CONFIDENTIAL

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4. COMMENT: CONSULATE WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO RUN RUMOR FURTHER TO GROUND JUST TO BE SURE. HOWEVER, WILDFIRE NATURE OF DISSEMINATION OF RUMOR, BASED ON REALLY RATHER SMALL INCIDENT, IS UNFORTUNATELY REFLECTIVE OF BAD CASE OF NERVES STILL AFFLICTING SHABA'S ZAIRIAN AND EXPATRIATE POPULATION, DESPITE PRESENCE OF PAF AND RATHER QUIET PERIOD OF THREE AND ONE-HALF MONTHS SINCE SHABA TWO. SIMPSON

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